

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-18, 20-24, 27 and 28 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-6, 8-18, 20-24, 27 and 28 have been rejected.

Claims 11 and 12 are objected to.

Claims 1, 10, 13, and 22 have been amended.

Claim 29 has been added.

Double Patenting

Claims 1-6, 8-18, 20-24, 27 and 28 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as purportedly being unpatentable over claims 1-28 of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/688,094. Since this is a provisional rejection, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated in this or the copending application.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. The Office Action states that claim 10 is indefinite as a result of “configured to allow” language in the claim. Applicants respectfully disagree. However, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 10 to recite that the custom data element is configured to facilitate customization of the common data object format. Applicants respectfully submit that it is clear that a custom data element can facilitate, or help to bring about, customization of the common data object format. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is purportedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 11 and 12 are objected to as depending from a claim rejected under 35

U.S.C. §101. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 10 to recite a system comprising a processor and data structure stored on a machine-readable storage medium coupled to the processor. Applicants note that this system cannot be a signal embedded in a carrier wave. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-6, 8-18, 20-24, 27 and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,043,687 issued to Knauss, et al. (“Knauss”), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,591,260 issued to Schwarzhoff, et al. (“Schwarzhoff”), and further in view of NPL _ XML _ Schcema _ CE. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited portions of Knauss, Schwarzhoff, and XML fail to disclose each feature of amended claim 1, which recites:

1. A method comprising:
receiving invoice information in an application-specific data object format from each of a plurality of applications;
translating the invoice information into a common invoice data object format, wherein
the translating is performed by a processor,
the common invoice data object format comprises at least one relationship data element, wherein
the relationship data element specifies at least one relationship between a plurality of entities,
the common invoice data object format comprises at least one custom data element, and
the custom data element facilitates customization of the common invoice data object format; and
determining essential data elements of the common invoice data object format, wherein
the essential data elements are stored in a memory coupled to the processor, and
the essential data elements comprise
an identification data element,
a base data element,
a pricing data element,
a shipping data element, and
a line item details data element.

For example, Applicants respectfully submit that the proposed combination of Knauss, Schwarzhoff, and XML fails to disclose determining that essential data elements of a common data object format comprise an identification data element, a base data element, a pricing data element, a shipping data element, and a line item details data element. The Office Action admits that Knauss fails to disclose these features of claim 1. Office Action, p. 6. The Office Action states that XML discloses complex data elements which may be defined as needed and Schwarzhoff discloses redefining or adding an extension to an element in a pre-existing document type. *Id.* The Office Action states that it would have been obvious to combine these features with Knauss and that such combination discloses the claimed features. *Id.* Applicants respectfully submit that such combination would not have been obvious, at least because Knauss depends on predefined mappings and explicitly discloses that any changes require the creation of a new map. *See* Knauss 8:38-42. Applicants respectfully submit that attempting to include redefinable data elements in a system which relies upon pre-defined mappings (and requires remapping in response to changes to a document type) would have unpredictable results, at best. Thus, the purported disclosure by XML and Schwarzhoff of defining elements “as needed” is fundamentally incompatible with Knauss. Furthermore, even if such teachings could somehow be combined without impermissibly changing the principle of operation of one or more of the references (which Applicants maintain is not the case) the Office Action has still not pointed to any portions of the cited references that disclose the claimed features.

Applicants respectfully submit that the proposed combination of Knauss, Schwarzhoff, and XML also fails to disclose a common invoice data object format comprising a relationship data element that specifies a relationship between entities. This element is included in amendments to claim 1 submitted herewith. Support for this amendment is found, at least, at Applicants’ Specification ¶ [0033] and FIG. 4B. As disclosed in Applicants’ Specification the claimed common data object format allows relationships between entities to be modeled as attributes for that entity. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited portions of Knauss, Schwarzhoff, and XML fail to disclose including such entity-specific information in a common invoice data object format. For example, Knauss explicitly discloses requiring a state domain database

external to Knauss's virtual document interface to provide data related to the target in a source-independent fashion. *See* Knauss 6:43-51. That is, the cited portions of Knauss fail to disclose preserving a relationship between entities in a common data object format.

Applicants respectfully submit that the remarks made above with regard to claim 1 apply with equal force to claims 10, 13, and 22, which contain substantially similar limitations. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to these claims and an indication of the allowability of same. Applicants further request Examiner's reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to claims 2-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14-18, 20, 21, and 23, 24, 27-29, which depend from allowable base claims 1, 10, 13, and 22, respectively.

Applicants have added new claim 29, which recites specifying a level of compatibility with a data object format of a first application, wherein the determining the essential data elements facilitates achieving the specified level of compatibility. Support for this claim is found, at least, at ¶ [0019] of Applicants' Specification. No new matter is added. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 29 recites features not disclosed by the proposed combination of Knauss, Schwarzhoff, and XML.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application and the claims therein are believed to be in condition for allowance without any further examination and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (512) 439-5092.

If any extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) are required in order for this submission to be considered timely, Applicants hereby petition for such extensions. Applicants also hereby authorize that any fees due for such extensions or any other fee associated with this submission, as specified in 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17, be charged to Deposit Account 502306.

Respectfully submitted,

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